

16 March 2021

1 Corinthians 9:1

As we begin 1 Corinthians 9, it should be abundantly clear that Paul's apostleship was being called into question by some in Corinth.

The answer to the questions in (V1) are all YES! YES, Paul was a commissioned apostle; YES, Paul saw the Lord; and YES, the saints/sinners in Corinth were Paul's work in the Lord!

Paul opens (C9) by defending his calling and commission to be an Apostle of Christ. One of the evidences of the authenticity of his apostleship was that he must be called and SENT by the Lord Jesus Himself, which is precisely what happened.

Apostle: Officially commissioned and SENT by the Lord, and.....gifted with miraculous powers from the Lord Jesus.

Paul asserted to the Corinthians, I am every bit an apostle, with all of the authority, responsibilities, and privileges of an apostle, as much as Peter and John and the other Apostles of Christ; I was commissioned by the Lord Himself, just like they were.

(V1): "Am I not an apostle?"

"Am I not free?"

The apostles were "The Sole Authority" in the NEW NT church; they were the builders of "The Church" under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore FREE from any earthly authority. They answered to none but the Lord Jesus! The "APOSTLES" were commissioned by the Lord Jesus, with power and authority to teach and preach the gospel;

Apart from the Lord Jesus, ONLY the Apostles that had the authority establish and write the doctrines upon which the church of Jesus Christ would be built.

And then, they had the authority to call, ordain, authorize, and empower elders and pastors to lead the new churches. *Acts 2:42, Ephesians 2:19-22*

Back to "Am I not free?" The freedom Paul spoke of, I believe refers to His freedom from any earthly authority as an Apostle of Christ. Jesus gave the apostles power and authority to build His church, as He said in *Matthew 16:13-19*

(V1-2): Yes, Paul was an Apostle of Christ, yes the scriptures teach us that Paul DID in fact SEE the Lord Jesus, when the Lord spoke to him and called him.

Back to the Corinthians questioning Paul's apostolic commission;

It was probably because he not one of Jesus' original apostles during His earthly ministry. But, Jesus IS THE Eternal Son of God, He is not bound by time or the period of His earthly life.

As He personally called each apostle in the days of His flesh, so after His death, resurrection, and ascension, He personally called Saul, now called Paul on the Damascus Road when He revealed Himself to him as the One whom he was persecuting, and the one whom He would SEND to the Gentiles.

Acts 9:1-9, 26:12-18, 1 Corinthians 15:5-10.

Understand that are NO MORE Apostles of Christ. After these men died, there were never any more Apostles of Christ. Those today who call themselves apostles are false apostles and nothing more.

(V2): Paul said, I may not be considered an apostle to others, but I am to you, speaking to the saints at Corinth.

Another proof of Paul's apostleship were the saints @ Corinthians. If God had not called me to your city and commanded me to stay and preach, the gospel WOULD NOT have come to you. YOU ARE MY WORK in the Lord; you are the seal of my apostleship. *Acts 18:1-8, Galatians 1:1, 2:8-9*

(V3): "Mine answer to those that examine me is this"

Or, these things (V1-2) are proof of my calling/commission to the apostleship.

(V4-6): Having proved his apostleship, Paul now proves that he should have all of the "rights" or "powers" that come along with being an Apostle of Christ.

I have the same rights/power (like the other apostles) to forbear working so that I may give myself to the ministry of the Word and the establishing of the churches. I have the right/power "to lead about a sister/wife" just like the other apostles, some of which were married. We do know that Peter was married.

The point here, (I think) is, the apostles did not stay in one place, but were travelers, going from city to city, preaching, teaching, and establishing the churches. If they had wives, and children, their families should also be supported as they traveled with them.

(V6): "Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?"

Don't we enjoy the same privileges of the apostolic ministry, just like the other Apostles of Christ? And yet, Paul went to great lengths to NOT be burdensome to the people to whom he ministered, even though he had the right to forbear working. What a lesson for preachers today to NOT be burdensome to the people of God!

Acts 18:3, 20:34, 1 Thessalonians 2:9

(V7-13): These truths ought to be obvious the spiritual mind in regard to the ministry of Christ.

Soldier don't fight without pay; the vineyard owner eats the fruits of his vineyard; the caretaker of the flock partakes of the meat and milk of the flocks.

Deuteronomy 25:4, 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Read (V10-11)

(V12): "If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power (or right); but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ"

Paul's great concern was not his own rights and privileges as an Apostle of Christ, but that the gospel of Christ would not be hindered. There were many enemies of the gospel, as there are in our today; therefore Paul did not use or press his right.

The word "suffer" here means to endure patiently or silently.

(V13-14): Matthew 10:7-10, Luke 10:3-9